CHRISTMAS IN THE KITCHEN.

THE HORRORS OF HOUSEKEEPING, Especially in the Festive Season.

REVIEWED BY A YOUNG MARRIED LADY.

DONE UP INTO VERSE BY HENRY SILVER, THE NOTED LONDON WIT, DRAMATIST, NOVELIST, AND PORT. Oh! the bother of giving mon dinners:

What a nisance is food, I declare I
How I wish that all hungry bread-winners,
Like chameloons, cou d live upon a rI
What with planning new soups and made dishes,
And giving one's orders to cooks,
One has no time to read what one wishes,
But must pore over soukers howkers. But must pore over cookery books. Ere your breakfast you've cosily taken

You've a lunch and a dinner to scheme,
And must think of tried diver and bacon
Wita your mouth full of coffic and cream.
You've to think, while your muffin you swallow,
Or a crisp bit of dry ton-t you crunch.
Whether boiled towl at dinner may follow,
After serving broiled chicken for lunch.

Composition by punater or poet Is rather a trouble some art;
But their labor is naught—well I know it—
To the toil of compound a carle.
Oh! the task so of dishes combining That one course with the next may not clash; Without ever making a hash.

As for cooks, I declare l've no patience Such wasters such wages to pay: And oh! how their army relations Make with cold meat and pickles away.
The your ear be as sharp as a lynx's,
The with one eye wide open you sleep,
You'll find that the e lapturent minkes On your larder their cousins will keep

Then those horrible butchers and bakers; How my mind with auxie y fills, As I think of those troublesome makers Of hierogly phical bil si Of heroglyphical bils!

Those dishmongers too, what a trouble

'Its daily their lists to look through,
And to see lest your orders they double,
And instead of one turbot send two.

With such worries to bore and to bother, No wonder my spirits should fait;
Nor, last week when I cail'd on my mother,
I hat she thought I was looking so pale.
O'er my troucles I'd tain oraw the curtain,
They are really quite dreadhit to bear;
I am losing my beath, that't for certain,
And I tear, too, I'm losing my hair.

At night I lie wakeful, tho' weary, And then of bad dinners I dream, Whi e Augustus hes happily snoring I'm thinking of pudd ags and pies, Or the dearness of mutton deploring, Or lamenting that milk, too, should rise,

Alas! now the season called "festive" No langer is festive to me In iou of light dances digestive,
To large dinners i've dai y to see.
How I sigh for relief from housekeeping! For a gallop or wa tz no v 1 pine!
How 1 wish that one's guests, before steeping
Upon simple cold mutton would dine.

I am fond of romance and light reading, Rank a love-tale all others above: But, with thoughts fail of cooking and feeding, One loses one's interest in love! Who can sympathize deeply with Lucy? Her passion about to reveal, White one thinks, "Will the turkey be juicy? And will cook brown nicely the yeal?"

Not a moment now have I to shop in, And scarce know what co or's the "go"; If by chance any ady iriends drop in, No light on such thing I can hrow. Then, if haply I yield to tem, ta ion. And go west some new bonnet to see, All the while I'm in sad tropication Lest they keep ainner waining for me.

Buttmy husband, who s aves in the city From nine in the moin tili near eight. Comes ravenous home, and no pity Is shown to poor me if I'm late He thinks rot of housekeeping fluries.

And the wornes of caries and of cooks;
But's raight to the table he hurries. And gives me the blackess of looks.

Then if the potatoes aren't mealy, If the grouse an't done to a shade He grows and he rumbles, till really
By his mutters quite nervous I'm made,
lie complains that my duries I'm shirking; Such an indo ent wile he lever knew That, while he like a herse has been working, I've really had nothing to do.

How oft, too, altho' in the morning l've said 'tis a cold mutton day, He brings home a fr.end w.thout warning, And begs that to dinner he'il stay! That we've no fish or pheasant to eat: He insists on the poor reliow's stopping, And then carves, with a growi, the cold meat

Then if I find fault with his carving. Or tell how he once mangled a goose, He complains that all curvers go sigrying, And suggests that we give a a Russe. A la Russe! ye, indeed, 't would delight me, If a cootman or two he'd engage: But how a fine dinner would fright me, When we've only one poor little page

Oh if only the worry and trouble Of composing a menu men knew, Our pin-money surely they'd double In reward for the worz that we do And, to make us think deeply upon it, They some 'good dinner prizes' shot And present a nice bracelet or bonnet For every nice pudding or pie.

Ah! had I but the wand of a fairy, I'd summon my cleverest elves,
To teach Freddy. Arthur, and Harry
How to cook their own disners themselves.
Were the husbands to slave in the k-tchen, Their wives might have loisure to think; Art and science their minds would grow rich in, And not merely eating and drink!

MR. PUNCH'S CHRISTMAS STORY.

LAURA GAVESTON; OR, THE LOVE-TEST.

BY MARK LEMON, EDITOR OF THE LONDON "PUNCH," AND THE MOST DISTIN-GUISHED WIT NOW LIVING.

"Wouldn't do it to night, Bob," said the hoarse voice of a woman. 'How the woman tatks!" replied the coarse

voice of a man. "Christmas Eve or no Christmas Eve, business must be minded;" and a rough fellow presented himselt in front of me. "You're Mr. Dorrington, and you've been spending Christmas Eve with the Ashleys? I have! What's that to you?"

Before I could finish the sentence my hat was forced over my eyes, a thick wrapper of some kind was thrown over my head, powerful hands grasped my arms, and I became conscious of being forced into a carriage of some kind, pos-sibly a street cab; and then I was evidently driven away at a rapid pace, a heavy hand pressing upon my chest.

All this was so momentarily done, and my surprise was so great, that I had offered little or no resistance.

After a time the vehicle, whatever it was, opped, and I was requested to descend. I did so, and, following the commands of my captor, ascended a flight of steps, which appeared to be carpeted. I was then led along a passage or gallery, carpeted also, until I heard a door open gently and then close. My wrapper was re-moved so instantaneously that, combined with the dazzling effect of a brilliant light, I did notice the departure of the persons who had exercised this violence upon me.

When I was sufficiently collected to observe all about me, I discovered that I was in an elegantly furnished apartment, lighted by a chandelier and several small sconces placed about the room. The chandelier and sconces were apparently oil silver, and all the ornaments in the room were noticeable for the cost-diness of their material and the periodiness of the taste which had constructed them. At one end of the room was the full-length portrait of

Did my eyes deserve me?

No! It was the counterpart presentment of aura Galveston, whom I had not three evenings before at Sir John Clagged's. The likeness I knew the west-end of London pretty well. Laura Galveston, whom I had net three even-ings before at Sir John Clagged's. The tikeness was admirable. There was the same noble carriage, the rounded bosom, the oval face, the long, dark, luxuriant hair, which, in defiance of fashion, she allowed to fall upon her magniti-cent showleers. True, the full dark eyes of the picture lacked the brilliancy of their living originals; the face was deficient in that inexpressible expressiveness which had so fasci-nated me! What could this adventure mean? I nated me! What could this adventure mean? I had danced with her lour times during the evening; I had had the Lappiness to hand her to her carriage, and I had boldly taken a camelia from her bouquet at parting, and had been unreproved! yet I had not dared to improve these slight advances, as Mr. Gaveston was reported to be immensely rich, and I am but an almost briefless barrister! Still I had encouraged the hope that we should meet again shortly and where I could no saithy discovery. shortly, and where I could possibly discover if I were agreeable to the beautiful heiross. She was Mr. Gaveston's only child. Why had I been

brought here? My self-questioning was soon to be answered A door, partly concealed by the folds of a full damask curtain, was opened, and Miss Gaveston entered the room. She was dressed much as she had been on the night of our meeting, except that a single diamond of striking brilliancy was bound upon her forehead.
I was so utterly confounded by all I had

undergone-all I saw-that I could not speak "Mr. Dorrington," she said, in a voice of music "I must ask your forgiveness for the extraordi-nary—perhaps I should say the unpardonable means I have used to bring you here; but time was so pressing, the occasion so urgent, that I did not hestiate to procure this interview at all risks, even of offenning you."

"Pray say no more," I replied; "I am made too happy by again meeting you."
"Thanke," said Miss Gaveston, interrupting me; "I believe you are wilting to serve me; I be lieve I may trust you. I could not misunderstand your attentions the other evening, and if I did not encourage them. I did not care to repei them. I need a trieud, Mr. Dorrington, and I believe I have found one in you."
"You believe truly," I replied. "Nothing you can require of me but I will gladiy do."

"Are you sure of that?" asked Miss Gaves-ton, the expression of her face changing from the most bewitching sweetness to that of an extreme carnestness. "Suppose I ask you to expose yourself to danger—to peril your life. Would you do it?"

"Willingly! I am ready now." Miss Gaveston then closed the door through which she had entered carefully, and draw the curtain before it. She then opened a small cabinet and produced a pair of pocket revolvers, which she placed on a small table, and then sat down beside it.

"Mr. Dorrington," she said, "I am about to make a confidence to you which I would make to no other man living; but I have told you the estimate I have formed of you, and you will not —you must not deceive me. Do not speak. I believe you will not deceive me. No doubt but you-like all my other mends and acquaintance-look upon me as one to be envied. I know I have more than the ordinary advantages of my sex, it would be affectation to say otherwise: I know I have accomplishments that are of value in society, and I know also that I am the daughter of a rich man. Advantages all these, to make what is called happines. I am about to dispel the delusion-to confide to you that I am wretched, and the cause that makes

me 50. She threw back ber beaut ful head, and shook her long ringlets from about her face as though what more sae had to say required her to brace up her nerves for the revelation. "Mr. Dorrington, did you ever notice my

father ?"

"I only saw him for a tew minutes at Sir John Clagget's,' I replied.
"Do I describe him rightly when I say, you saw a mild, benevolent-looking gentleman, who appeared to be at peace with all the world, and to whom any deed of violence seemed to be impossible?" "Yes, certainly, that is my recollection of

"You are deceived. Beneath that placid exterior exists a nature that is never at rest, except when courting danger; never satisfied but when adding to his already abundant hoards; hesitating at the means which will gratify his avarice.

"You astound me! I istress me!" I said. "You must be made of sterner stuff, if you are to be of service to me," replied Miss Gaveston. "Hear me to an end, and then decide to accept or decline the service I shall ask of you. My lather, despite his inilings, is very dear to me, as I am to him. I would not venture to question what he thinks proper to do, did it not expose him to danger-to great danger, night I have reason to believe he will be en-gaged with some desperate men, who are employed by him in the transport of an object of great value, of alm at national importance. He has gone alone to this rend zvous, and I tear that the temptation of the prize he is desirous to secure may prove too strong for his associates, and —I dare not contemplate what I tear!—I have selected you.

Mr. Dorrington, from all my sequaintance, all my protessed admirers, to take a part which would delegate to no one were I of your sex. I have courage, will, and resolution; but these poor fragile limbs, this pretty face, are worse than useless to me in this extremity.

"What do you require of me?" I asked. "Tell me, my dear Miss Gaveston, and you shall not regret the confidence you have placed in

me."
"I wish you," she answered slowly, pausing upon every word, "I wish you to go with a man I will appoint to the place where my father meets his desperate confederates. They may either attempt to destroy him, or betray him to the police. He is as brave as a lion, and if he knew he had a friend beside him he would be a match for a dozen such curs as I have always known bad men to be. Take these pistols, they are capped and loaded. The round your neck this silk cravat; my father will recognize it. Should be be attacked, defend him with your life. Should be be betrayed, shoot Better death than discovery of dishonor

able pursuits. Do you accept?" The proposition to murder Mr. Gaveston was so extraordinary, that I ventured to suggest both its wickedness and impolicy, and Mr. Gaveston would be surely recognized, dead or

"Give me your hand, Mr. Dorrington," she said; "I now trust you entirely. I thought you would have professed to have accepted anything I might have proposed, resolving to de-ceive me. I now know that I may trust my father's safety to you. It is time you departed. Follow me!"

She opened what appeared to be a large japanned cabinet, but which was really the concealed entrance to some stairs, down which she descended, and I followed. We came at last to what seemed to be a cellar, the only light being from the gas-lamp in the street; a least I judged so from the iron bars through

which it came.
"Judkins," said Miss Gaveston, "here is your companion. Give him an overcoat and a cao. Be his guide to the house in Wapping. Be careful; let none of your old comrades see you, as you can guess the consequences." was soon wrapped in a rough overcoat which smelled of coarse tobacco and that frowsy odor of a garment that has been im-

perfectly dried. "Are you ready?" asked Miss Gaveston. "Yes," I replied.

"Kiss my forehead." I did so, guided to it by the brilliant gem which had caught my attention. I judged by a slight noise I heard that Miss Gaveston had left the celtar, and that I was alone with my unknown, almost un-

seen companion. I was right.

"Now, sir, this way. We shall have to walk fast if we are to do any good. It's past one."

I followed in the direction of the sound of the man's voice, and was defighted after a time to find myself in the street, though the rain and myself in the street, though the seen but fell beavily, and not a soul was to be seen but my companion, a small and decrepit creature, who shufiled rather than walked along at a

but we were evidently far in the east, and I had

o knowledge of our whereabouts. The houses on either side of the street looked wretched in the extreme, seen as they were by the feeble light of two street lamps placed at long intervals apart. Late as it was, there were dim lights within some of the rooms, and as we passed along we heard voices, some loud in quarrel, others roaring in chorus. At two of the docrways sat huddled up in their fifthy rags poor drunken wretches who had staggered to the entrance of their miserable homes, and had been unable to obtain admittance. The rain continued to fall heavily, splashing upon the pavement, and pouring down here and there from the diapidated water-pipes above. The wind dashed the rain about, and rattled against the window-frames not at all times filled with plass; every now and then it nearly blinded me as it blew the rain into my isce, and at last found its way through my thick outer coat, chilling the marrow in my bones, Neither I nor my companion had exchanged a

word; but at last I called to him:-"Hi! my man? How much further have we to so? I am getting tired and cold." "I don't wonder at it, I'm like ice, I am," replied the man; "there's not a public open either, to get a drop to warm one."

"Well, answer my question," I said.
"On, ab! well, it's at the bottom of the next street that runs down to the river. I expects we're too late. Howsomever, we've lost no time, have we!" I briefly answered "No," and followed on in

allence. The street we soon entered was more wretched, if possible, than the one we had ust traversed, and the few lights on the river discernible through the rain only made the cesolateness more apparent.

"Here's the crib, mister," said my guide, stopping before a dilapidate I house; "you must go right through the passage—here's a string somewhere here which pulls up the latch—and cross the yard till you come to a big door with rats na led on it; knock twice, count four and kneck twice again; somebody'll open the door, perhaps, and if so, say you want Mr. Davis—that's the name they call Mr. G. when he's on business down here."

proceeded to put into practice the instructions of my guide, but the thought of Miss Gaveston gave me renewed courage, and I entered the passage of the house. As I groped my way along I was made aware that my footing was not the most secure, as more than once the rotting coards broke under my tread, and I was glad to reach the open yard, though I could scarcely see my hand before me. With less difficulty than I had anticipated, I found the door at which I was to give the mysterious signal. I did as I had been instructed, and after a short interval the door opened, and Mr. Gaveston presented himself. He was very unlike the respectable gentleman I had met at Sir John's, but I recognized him instantly. He wore a long pilot coat reaching to his feet, and a rough fur cap on his

What do you want, my man?" he asked. I opened the top of my outer coat, and showed him the silk cravat around my neck. "Silly girl!" he said, half aloud. "She is

always alarming herself unnecessarily. Be prudent, and follow me." I obeyed, and soon found myself in a low room nearly filled with tobacco-smoke. Two or three candles were dimity visible amid the fumes which were exhaled from the pipes of ome halt-dozen ferocious-looking fello ws seated at the table. 'Who's this, skipper?" asked one of the men.

"A friend that I expected," replied Gaveston.
"And what do you want to meet your friends in this ken for, Mr. Davis?" said the man, rather saucily.

Mr. Gaveston's reply is not transcribable; but it was so clear and emphatic that his questioner threatened to resort to personal violence, and was supported by two or three of his comrades.

"One step neaver, Grover, and I send a bullet through your head. You know how fittle I mind your threats. I bite and don't bark," said Mr. Gaveston. "What I do care or, however, is a treacherous sneak who, for his own advantage, makes terms with the "Who-me?" roared Grover, quite taken

"Yes, you; and that's what brought my friend here to-night. If you could have got away an hour ago, as you wanted, we should have had the blues here by this time."

Crover's companions were not men to hear both sides of a case, and taking it for granted that what Mr. Gaveston said was true, the unlucky accused was instantly subjected to such rough treatment that it was a wonder he had ot required transmission to the hospital. During the confusion, Gaveston, grasping my rm, left the room, and continuing to hold me. led the way to the river by, what appeared to be, a road underground.

The rain had ceased, but dark leaden clouds still rolled overhead, occasionally, however, re-vealing the full moon, obscured as it seemed by thick coverings of smoky gauze. As we drew accere to the river, having come forth into the street. I fancied I saw crouching in the shadow ot a low wall a human figure. The moon cast a momentary light upon the object, and, muffled and disguised as the person was, I could have worn it was no other than Miss Gaveston. But in a moment the clouds had hidden the meon again, and the figure had vanished. It was slmost low water, and, despite the heavy rain which had fallen so continuously, the rough stones of the "hard" were slippery with slime and mud. We succeeded, however, in reaching large row-boat in which were two men, evi-

dently expecting us. Without speaking, Mr. Gaveston stepped into the boat, signalling me 'Where are our mates, sir " asked one of the

"Ouarrelling among themselves, as usual." plied Gaveston, shortly. "We will not wait for them. I'll take an oar, and my friend here will steer. Take us out to the middle of the iver, and keep a sharp look out, Dorrington. It was evident that Mr. Gaveston knew me. My eyes soon became accustomed to the dark-less, and I could see the black hulls of the veels lying at anchor sufficiently to avoid them, although more than once the oars touched their mooring chains.

No one spoke a word for more than half an bour, until a craft showing a light in her after cabin was discernible, lying nearly in our direct "Steer alongside the vessel you see ahead,"

said Gaveston. I obeyed; and in a few more strokes our boat grazed the stranger craft, which had been constructed for speed, and might have been formerly a yacht, now condemned to be employed in traffic more or less honorable. The man in the bows climbed up the side like a cat, and made

ns fast. Gaveston, with agility that surprised me, ascended to the deck of the stranger, bidding us wait where we were until the tide turned. It was not long before the vessel to which we were attached began to swing with the flow; but, overpowered by fatigue, I fell asleep, I fancy, as Gaveston had taken his place again in the boat before I noticed him. Some object covered with tarpaulins lay, now, in the bottom of the boat, and the moon was once more dimly visible. "Now, lads, with a will," said Mr. Gaveston; and the boat was soon under good way. It was well for us that we had more light, as the ships

and barges were swinging with the tide, and it required all my skill and attention to keep clear of difficulties. The clank of capstans and the discordant voices of the sailors employed hauling at the seils—needful to keep them from fouling their anchors—had almost a officering influence upon me, so long had we been rowing in situace and darkness. I now noticed for the tirst time that the rowlocks of our boat were padded, and the oars muffled, so that we made our way through the water almost noiselessly. I could not recognize any of the objects on shore. True, I was but slightly acquainted with the banks of the river, but I sow neither

the Tower, nor the Custom House, which pos-ibly were hidden from our sight by the forest of masts and hulls through which we were

steering. We must have passed them, as we now shot a bridge; but I could not define its outline, as the clouds had gathered again over

the moon. On we went in ellence still, until the roar of waters, as though among piles and starlings, made me aware that we were approaching Binckfriars, which I had seen the night before. the thinking I should soon have to encounter what appeared to me the dangers of the passage.
"Keep us well in the middle, sir," said Gaveston; "we are heavily laden, and may capsize if we louch a pile or buttress."

I felt my responsibility. A cold sweat came upon my forchead, and my heart beat quickly. The great coal bres burning in cressets overhead, whilst they afforded light, made the surging, muddy water appear more appalling, and the huge timbers terming the scaffol ling of the bridge seemed like the wreck of some great leviathan. My hands clutched the tiller with as it were a death grasp, but my muscles trembled violently.

Through in safety 1 and the revulsion of feeling made me breathe quickly—neavily.

"That's well over," said Gayeston. "Had the

The nose of the boat had struck some heavy object in the water, and her side was scraping against it. I looked earnestly, and by the light that was almost derkness any what I pelicyed that was almost darkness saw what I believed to be a human face float past. A woman's face like—but that must have been fancy. A sickness and then a faintness seized on me,

and I became unconscious When I recovered I found myself in a room of considerable size. The panels were of oak, on which hung portraits of faces which seemed to be not altogether unfamiliar to me. The the owner was old-tashioned enough to honor to Christmas-tide. I had scarcely time to observe this, when Gavesten, attired more like his proper self, came in, followed by two sca-faring men, carrying a small oak chest clamped with iron bands

Having placed it upon the table, they with-In another moment Laura Gayeston entered. dressed in a long mantle of black velvet lined with sable fur. A cap of the same materials was placed rather coquettishly on one side of her magnitic nt head, and lent, if possible, increased beauty to her fascinating face! A thrill of loy passed through my frame when I saw her stand before me in all her living love-liness. She held out both her hands to me, and I can never hope again to experience such a sensation of exquisite happiness as then

possessed me! "Dorrington," said Mr. Gaveston, "Laura can alone repay you for the service you have rendered me this night. I have promised her that for the rest of my life I will forego such adventures; but this "he laid his hand upon the oak chest—"this was worth the risk—the

"And I do thank you, Mr. Dorrington, from ny heart of hearts," said Miss Gaveston. "I wish it were in my power to make you a better recompense.

I placed my hand in my bosom and produced se camelia I had taken from her bouquet, and held it towards her. She took my hand in hers and closed my tingers upon the faded flower.
"Keep it, Mr. Dorrington," she said, in a low

whisper, "and I promise to redeem it whenever you ask me to do so."
I should have folded her in my arms had not Mr. Gaveston spoken.
"Come! come!" he said, "I am about to exhibit my treasure."

He produced a bright key and slowly opened the chest.

When he had done so, a pale, light vapor ascended from the box, and an odor of fragrant spices pervaded the room.
"It is safe!—unbroken! A perfect chryso-lite!" cried Gaveston. "Help me to raise it,

Dorrington.' I hastened to comply with his request, and looking into the box was startled at what I saw.
"Quick!—quick!" cried Gaveston; "Laura is dying to behold it." And then by our united efforts we brought forth a smcking Christmas pudding. What followed is soon told.

"Sir!-sir!" said a man's voice, "we've got to Hisleworth-gate, sir." "Ilseworth! I told you to drive to Kensington !" Down the Kensington road, sir, you says; and I've druv down it."

Forgive me, gentle reader. I hear you exclaim:—"Another of those stupid dream stories." Yes, and they are common enough I own, especially on Christmas Eves, with spoony young men made drowsy and dreamy by the good cheer which still abounds in many a hospitable home at this festive season. And so, for the merry season's sake, forgive us our loo ling.

CHRISTMAS POEM FOR ALL GOOD BOYS.

"HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE!"

ST. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON.

AN ANCIENT MYTH MODERNIZED. BY MISS DINAH MARIA MULOCH, THE CELEBRATED

NOVELIST, AUTHOR OF "JOHN HALIFAX,

GENTLEMAN," ETC. ETC. ETC.

What, weeping, weeping, my little son, Angry tears, nke that great commander, Alexander— Secause of dragons is left not one To be a new Cappadocia's scourge For your bold staying, Without delaying—

On Shetland pony— So bright and bonny— A knight all mounted-a young St. George? Come, sit at my feet, my little son,

Sit at my feet, and mend your wagon!
Full many a dragon
You'll have to fight with, ere life be done.
Stay—and I'll tell you of three or four
(Villanous cattle)
You'll have to battle,
When mother's sleeping
Where all your weeping Will not awaken her any more.

First comes a creature whose name is Sloth, Looks like a lizard, creeping on sleekly,
Simple and weakly,
Who couldn't harm you, however wroth,
But slay him, my lad, or he'll slay you:
Crawling and winding,
Twisting and binding,
Break from him, transpon him

Break from him, tramp on him, And asyou stamp on him, You'll be St. George and the Dragon, anew. Then there's a monster, most fair at first, Called Ease, or Comfort, or harmless Pleasure; Born of smooth Leisure, On scented cushions luxurious nursed Who'll buy your sou, it you'll seil it, just To catch one minute With Joyance in it, Or ward off sorrow

Until to-morrow frample him-trample him into dust And one, a reptile, yelept False Shame, Who silently drags its fettered length on, And tries its strength on Many a spirit else pure from blame. But up and at it your courser urge! Smite, smite, I trow, hard,

The moral coward, By throne or altar, And never falter. And be my own son-my brave St. George! St. George and the Dragon! ah, my boy, There are many old dragons left-world scourges—
And few St. Georges!
There's mickie labor, and little joy!
But on with you—on to the endless fight!
Your sword tight buckling,
To no man truckling,
Bear your bright flow on

Bear your bright flag on, And slay your dragon. St. George for ever! God shield the right! "HONI SOIT QUI MAL Y PENSE."

The London Telegraph has the largest circulation in England, 155,000.

YOUNG LADY'S PAIRY CHRISTMAS TALE. 1

THE BROWN IMP'S STORY FAITH AND PATIENCE

BY MISS JULIA GODDARD, AUTHOR OF "JOYCE DOMER'S STORY," AND OTHER PRIZE TALES,

"Alas for vesterday!" It was a Brown Imp that spoke, and he darted hither and thither, whispering his idle words to the brook, and rivers, and to every trickling thread of running water; he knew they would babble them to the world as they went along, and he thought it a fine thing that his words should go through the length and breadth of the length.

And the great red sun, sinking to sleep amongst the golden clouds, heard them, and somehow felt as though they would disturb his

The water dripped through the fissures in the rocks down to the Earth-King's palace, far under the tail mountains; and as the drops plashed upon the pavements of sbining spar, a silvery wail arose and echoed through the vaulted roofs hat gleamed with brilliant stalactites, and one heard the mournful words-"Alas for yesterday !"
And the dwarfs, and the Kobolds and the

mps, and the browness hearing them, drooped beir heads; and their laughter, which rang meirily enough before, was hushed when that low wail, so soft, so clear, and yet so powerful,

The Earth-King was indiguant; he mounted his black steed and spurred him through the subterranean passages until he came to an outlet, near which the Brown Imp was sitting.

The Brown Imp knew that he was coming, for

the charger's hoofs might be heard miles off. And the Brown Imp affected carelessness, though his heart smote him; and he determined to brave out what he had done. "Why dost thou trouble the earth?" asked the monarch, and he waved his wand.

And lo! innumerable spirits issued forth in snowy garments; they had ice-crowns on their heads and ice-chains in their hands, and they bound the rivers and streams so that they stood still and silent, and their voices were

heard no more.

The Brown Imp laughed scornfully.

"The Sun-King will unloose the letters," said he, "and the waters will go babbling on."

But the Sun-King, raising his head, an-I will send forth my myrmidons, and they shall drink up the waters so that their voices shall be hushed for ever."

And again the Brown Imp laughed. "The Storm-King," he said, "will send a cloud-army, and the rivers and streams again be full and flowing."
For the Storm-King was at enmity with the

For the Storm-King was at entity with the other monarchs.

Then the Earth King returned sorrowfully to his palace, since the Brown imp's idle words could not be stayed, and the Earth-King himself becan to be infected by them.

"Alas for yesterday!" Why had the words been spoken! They could never be unsaid; the evil was done; it had gone through the earth for ever and ever.

ever and ever. The sun sank down, and when the great church-clock struck five, all the golden clouds and crimson streaks had faded into gray, and the grey was deepening into blue—clear, transparent night blue, and the stars looked down with kindly twinkling eyes upon the earth, shining more cheerily because the blessed Christmas time had come.

And the moon shed floods of gentle light upon the old church to record the company.

upon the old church tower and the frosted-over trees, and turned to silver the points and pinnacles of architectural piles that graced the busy cities, or the old gable ends of lone farmhouses, or the latticed casements of the cottages, for the moon shone everywhere, and sent as bright a ray of glory through the broken windows and cracked shutters of the poorest room as into the stately apartments of the rich; perhaps even softer and more lingering rays. for she knew that there was sorrow in the earth, and she longed to comfort it.

The winds were still to-night, and the rivers and streams were silent; or if one torrent wilder than the rest struggled to regain his voice, and hoarsely murmur the Brown Imp's words, the ice-nymphs wound their cold white arms still closer round him, and breathed their icy kisses till they kissed him fast asieen.

But the rivers had murmured the Imp's words to the ocean, and the Earth-King bad no power over the restless sea. And down sea-shore you might hear the waves repeating. "Alas for yesterday !"

So the Brown Imp was triumphant. 'See what the tongue may do," said he; "it is a marvellous member." And a great fish popped its head out of the water, and stared at bim with dull, leaden eyes in a melancholy manner; but the nah was dumb.

and could only lash its tail about to express its feelings. And the Brown Imp knew well enough that it was protesting against the commotion that the talking waves were making.

He had always thought that fishes were deaf, but it seemed that he must be mistaken.

people are mistaken about something or other, and the Brown Imp was not an exception. Then a little girl came tripping down to the water's edge; she, too, saw the great fish with bis head out of the water, and his dull, staring eyes, and his jaws wide open, as it he wished to say something, only he could not.

"Oh, you great stupid fish!" said the little girl, and down he plunged with a great splash,

so that Meta saw him no more; but she heard the waves saying, "Alas for yesterday!" and she supposed that it was the dsh speaking to her. Then she was sorry that she had laughed, for she thought the fish must be in trouble. But still the words went on, and now she know that the waves were speaking, and their complaint was so mournful that she turned away sadly, and went home.

The Brown Imp's conscience smote him, his idle words had brought such a look of sorrow into the child's face; but he could not unsay them, they must go on forever.
"Mother," said the child, "why are the waves

so sad—what are they wailing for ?" And as she spoke the wind came sighing round the cottage, and it whispered the same words that the waves had been murmuring on the shore; softly at first, then louder and louder until both child and mother heard them plainly. "Alas for yesterday !"

The mother shuddered, "It is the wail of life," she said; "the winds and waters know it, the sun and moon look down and hear it, but they can give no help; the stars try to send comfort, and seem to say Come to us, for we are nearer heaven than yeare;' but it is no use, earth-voices ring the burden, and it enters deep into human hearts." "And must we always hear it?" asked the child; "I never heard it before, and there will be no more pleasure in hie now."

Meta was silent the rest of the evening and scarcely troubled herself to wonder what Santa Claus would put into her stocking, but

went to bed with the dreamy words still wall ing in her ears-'Alas for yesterday !" "The Princess Linda's heart is broken!"

Meta started up from her restless sleep, and looked round. The moon was shining into the room, and it was almost as light as day. She could see no one, and yet she was certain that son c one had spoken to her.

"The Princess Linds's heart is broken!" again The Princess Linda's heart is broken!" again "But I do not know who the princess is,

replied Meta, involuntarily; for she was quite sure that she was not dreaming. "Shall I tell you the story?" asked the Brown Imp.

He was sitting curled up at the foot of the bed, so that Meta had taken him for one of the

carved walnut posts.
"Yes," a newered Meta, not feeling at all surprised at the appearance of the Brown Imp, for she thought he might be some one belonging to Santa Claus, or even Santa Claus himself, who not having anything to put into her stocking,

was going to tell her a story instead, which would live forever in her mind, and, perhaps, be, on the whole, as satisfactory as anything in the could give her.

"I saw you down upon the shore to-day, when you were looking at the steat fish," said the Brown Imp; "but I did not know then that the Princess' heart was broken."

"Ah," returned Meta, slowly. "Was that the reason," she continued, "that the waves were saying, 'Alas for yesterday!' The winds have been saying it also, but how could I guess that it had anything to do with a princess? What is a princess like? for I have never seen one."

one."
"Like other people," answered the Brown
Imp; 'the Princess Linda happened to be very
beautiful; some princesses are, some are not.

beautiful; some princesses are, some are not.

10's quite a chance."

"Oh!" said Meta, agsin.

"The Princess Linda had blue eyes, and fair hair that shone like pale gold. The Prince of Rosenfluss fell in love with her."

"Yes," responded Meta. "Why?"

"How should I know," said the Brown Imp:
"I dare say he didn't exactiv know himself.

It's a sort of a thing that comes to pass without people being abie to account for it; at least

people being able to account for it; at least, that is the result of my observation, for as a Brown Imp I have had no personal experience. It can't always be for qualities, or beauty, or talents, or anything else; at any rate, I should think not," said the Brown Imp, reflectively. "Certainly not for temper in many cases."

"Perhaps it was her golden hair?" suggested

Meta,

"Perhaps so; I can't say. I only know that
he fell in love with her, and she with him, and
they were as happy as the day is long—in
summer time, not in the winter, of course,"
added the Brown Imp, revisingly, "and they
were to be married very soon, and the preparations for the wedding were so grand, that people far and near were talking about what a sight it

"I should like to see it," said Meta.
"Yes; but you forget there is to be no wedding now, for the princess's heart is broken !" Meta sighed. "Did you ever hear of the Nixies?" asked the

"Did you ever hear of the Nixles?" asked the Brown Imp.
"No," replied Meta.
"Well, then, I must explain. The Nixles are water nymphs living far down under the waters. They fleat about on the rivers, and find out all that is going on upon the earth; and they heard about the Prince of Rosenfluss and the Princess Linda, and it made one of them very apers."

"Because she had fallen in love with the prince herself,"

"Ah!" ejaculated Meta.
"Now, a Nix may marry a human being, if she can persuade one to marry her; and so this Nix determined to put away the Princess Linda from the prince's heart, and make him love her instead

"And how did she manage it?" "The princess was sitting by the river-side looking into the blue waters, and dreaming of her happiness, when a sad voice near her said. Sweet princess, pity me! and close beside her she saw a very fair woman with long dark hair, and dark eyes that shone like diamonds. 'How can I help you?' asked the princess. 'I am an unfortunate Nix,' returned the water-spirit, 'and I weep that a human life is not mine. There is little happiness in floating about singing songs from year's end to year's end. I long for the happiness that belongs to human beings. And the Princess Linda did not wonder at it, for she was so filled with happiness herself."

"She had not heard 'the wall of hie, then?" said Meta, remembering her mother's words. "No," rejoined the Brown Imp; "but she has heard it now." 'The Nix wept at her feet and besought her aid. 'If thou wilt plunge once underneath the waves with me, then shall I be as thou art, O happy princess; and I pledge thee my word that thou shalt return in safety.' Then the princess resolved to make the Nix as happy as

herselt. Alas! poor princess; when she rose from the waters and beheld her image on their glassy surface, her blue eyes and her golden hair were gone, and in their place the dark looks of the Nix floated around her, and the Nix's diamond eyes flashed back at her from the watery mirror. And laughing at her woe, the talse Nix stood beside her, with her eyes and pale gold treases 'I shall thou art now,' said she; "I shall marry the Prince of Rosenfluss," "And what happened?"

The Nix went to live at the castle with Linda's parents, and the princess begs from house to house; and none believe her story." "Not even the prince?" "How should he, when appearances are so

against her ?"

"And so she has heard at last, 'Alas for yesterday !" The Brown Imp did not like to hear his idle words brought up.
"All this happened some time ago," said he,
"the rivers froze as they were telling me the

story; so I shall have to wait until there is a thaw to hear the rest." Meta sat up in bed. "I think," said she, "that it is warmer; perhaps a thaw has come on. Do go down to the river and see. I must know what became of the

princess after she had heard the wail of life." Meta did not know how long she had been sleep, but she opened her eyes just as the Brown Imp was saying:—
"The Prince of Rosenfluss married the Nixprincess, and there was a grand wedding.

"Oh, I am so sorry," said Meta, rubbing her "So am I," said the Brown Imp; "but what is "And where is the Princess Linda?" "The Nix-princess precented to be sorry for the poor demented woman, and offered her a place as serving maid."

"And did she accept it ?" "Yes; for she would still be near the Prince of Rosenfluss."

"I should not have cared for the prince if he had not believed in me," said Meta. "But the princess did," returned the Brown mp. "She had a little garret up at the top of the palace to sleep in, and every night two angels came and watched beside her. And as they bent over her and kissed her, one whispered:—The past is gone forever—toil on, and thou shalt find rest! And the other said:— 'The future hath not yet come; despair not; sooner or later the right shall be made known,' And in the morning the princess awoke, comforted. It it had not been for the angels, she could not have done her work during

the day time. "Day after day she toiled on silently, and at night the angels visited her, and still their words were 'Despair not;' and she bravely held on her way, though she grew paler and thinner, and her step was slower and her voice weaker. "At last she grew so weak that she could not leave her wietched couch; and still the angels

But lo! a marvellous change took place.

As life ebbed slowly away, her locks turned paly gold once more, and her eyes were blue as in days of old. And the servants in days of old. And the servants, wondering, told their master. And as they spoke the Nixprincess, too, was changed; her hair and eyes assumed their former hue, and the Prince of Recenfluss knew that he had been deceived." "And did the princess see him before she

"Yes; and as he held her in his arms she whispered, 'I have not waited in vain, for thou hast come to me at last!"" "And then she died !" said Meta, sobbing "Yes," answered the Brown Imp, sorrowially; and yet a ray of joy had entered his heart to think that there were argels with power to

soothe all those who might hear the words, 'Alas for vesterday !" "Mother," said Meta, when she had told her the Brown Imp's story, "who were the angels? Will they come to me when the wail of life sounds

dreartly "I trust so, my child."
"Mother, who were those angels " asked the

And the mother answered -

The augois were raith and Patience."